

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	PDI-00	DS-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OIC-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00	GIWI-00	PRS-00
	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	EVR-00	FMP-00	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00
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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE, EUR/PGI, EUR/PPD

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TAGS: [KISL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [SCUL](#) [SOCI](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: EUR/PGI WEINSTEIN'S VISIT TO THE NETHERLANDS FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION CONFERENCE AND CONSULTATIONS

¶1. EUR/PGI's Ivan Weinstein, who heads EUR's policy formulation on engaging with Muslims and other minorities in Europe, visited The Netherlands September 21-23, 2009, to attend a conference on the intercultural policies of European cities, consult with Embassy The Hague, and meet with the American Chamber of Commerce on their workforce diversity internship program.

¶2. Dutch Minorities - Context: The Muslim population in The Netherlands is about 1 million, or 6 percent of the overall population. In the largest cities the percentage is much higher. The large majority of Muslims are of Moroccan or Turkish origin, though The Netherlands also has a variety of ethnic minorities from around the world. As in other West European countries, Dutch ethnic minorities experience discrimination and have lower levels of employment, education and other socioeconomic indicators.

¶3. Integration Conference: The conference was organized by the Network of Cities for Local Integration Policy (CLIP), an arm of the European Foundation. CLIP consists of 30-plus European cities, and conducts research modules every few years on issues related to immigrants and integration. This meeting was convened to synthesize the results of the latest module, on intercultural policies, with a focus on Muslim communities. Weinstein made a presentation on immigrant integration in the United States. Background on CLIP and the foundation can be found at www.eurofound.europa.eu.

¶4. Conference Findings: The city representatives at the conference were enthusiastic and sincere in their desire to improve conditions for minorities and relations between minority and majority populations. For the most part, they were realistic about the challenges and have undertaken concrete initiatives to address them. This is worth noting, since until several years ago many European officials did not acknowledge problems associated with integration in a clear way. At the same time, representatives from several cities mentioned they felt restrained by their political leadership's reluctance to fully take on minority-related issues. In addition, much of the discussion focused on the immigrants and minorities - both what they should do to better integrate themselves and what the city governments should do to help them - with less attention to the role of broader mainstream society and the reciprocal nature of the integration process. Also of note was that most of the city officials, as well as the organizers and researchers, were ethnic European. The only outspoken minority participant in the conference was an official of the European Network Against Racism, who pointed out what he considered insensitivities in several presentations.

¶5. American-Dutch Chamber of Commerce workforce diversity internship program: The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) launched a program several years ago to promote employment opportunities for minorities. Called Champs on Stage, the program supports high school students with internships and mentoring, in partnership with dozens of companies and the city governments of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. More information is available at www.championstage.nl. State/EUR is exploring ways to encourage posts and local

stakeholders in other countries to launch similar initiatives.

Levin